

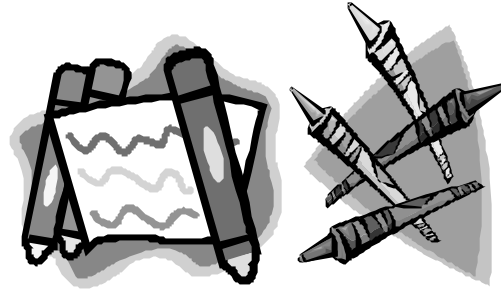
Greetings!

This is the last in the series of school-readiness bulletins. These bulletins have offered you ideas on how to help your children build the skills to succeed in school. This last bulletin focuses on art and creativity. Creativity is a very important skill to develop in your child. Through this bulletin, we give you tips on how to encourage your child to be creative. We also give you a fun art project to try with your child.

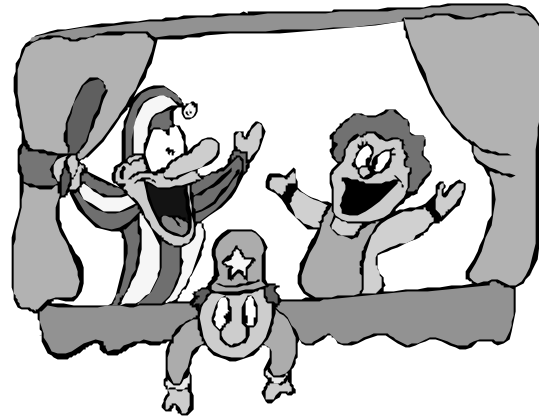


Here are some ways to build an art-friendly, creative home:

- Have art supplies—crayons, markers, pencils, stamps, construction paper, etc.—for your child to play with at home. Give your child lots of different materials to work with. Encourage him/her to draw pictures, make collages, sculpt imaginary animals out of clay, and so on.



- Give your child puppets to play with. (Or help your child make his/her own out of old socks or paper bags.) Encourage your child to act out the stories you read in books. Help your child to make up his/her own stories and act them out with the puppets.

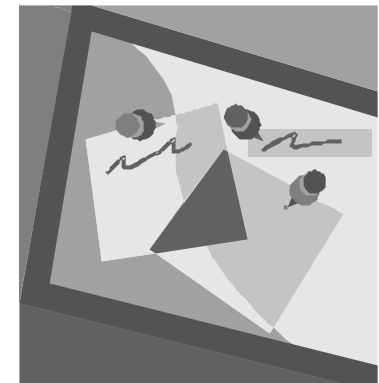


- Encourage your child's imagination by playing "Let's pretend" games. For example, pretend you are going on a trip somewhere. What will you pack? Where will you go? How will you get there?
- Let your child's imagination run wild. Don't tell him/her what to draw or paint.

- Remember, it will take a lot of practice before you can recognize your child's pictures—that often doesn't happen until after he/she is in kindergarten. Don't "fix" your child's pictures. Instead, ask your child to talk about what he/she has drawn.



- Display your child's art prominently in your home. Put your child's drawings on the refrigerator, or you might even get a special projects framed.



To encourage your child's artistic skills, try this fun project, and make your own play dough:

Art with your own Play Dough

Materials you need:

- 1 cup flour
- 1/3 cup salt
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 teaspoons Cream of Tartar
- Food coloring

What to do together:

Mix all ingredients in a sauce pan. Cook and stir over low/medium heat until play dough forms a soft ball and is no longer sticky. When the play dough is cool enough to handle, knead dough for a minute or two before storing it in an air tight container or zip lock bag. You will need to do this three or four times depending on how many colors you want to have for your art

After a day your play dough is ready for your art creations. Have fun with your child designing all kinds of things. Start out with easy things like a rainbow and move to more challenging objects like an animal. Let your child create things that are imaginary and have him or her describe it to you



Ready, Set, Go ...:

Ready, Set, Go ... Getting Children Ready for School is a series of four educational bulletins about school readiness for parents of children aged three to six. The purpose of the bulletins is to help parents prepare their young child to enter school. The bulletins focus on four areas: language/reading, math, science, and art. The bulletins offer general advice on how parents can help their child develop skills in these important areas through fun activities.

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Getting Children Ready for School



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